

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRASIL 01004 062109Z

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /055 W

----- 058142

R 061955Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7642

INFO AMCONSUL BELEM

AMCONSUL PORTO ALEGRE

AMCONSUL RECIFE

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

AMCONSUL SALVADOR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BRASILIA 1004

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, BR

SUBJECT: NEW SENATE PRESIDENT SIGNALS STRENGTHENED CONGRESS,
EXPANDED ROLE FOR POLITICIANS

REF: BRASILIA 944

SUMMARY: NEW SENATE PRESIDENT MAGALHAES PINTO, IN
SWEARING-IN SPEECH, RAISED PROSPECTS FOR A REVITALIZED
CONGRESS AND AN EXPANDED ROLE FOR POLITICIANS IN THE
CONTEXT OF "INSTITUTIONAL NORMALIZATION", THUS CAUSING
MORALE IN POLITICAL CIRCLES TO REBOUND SHARPLY FROM
THE LOW BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE STATEMENT OF JUSTICE MIN-
ISTER FALCAO (REFTEL). WHILE OF COURSE NOT CONTRADICTING
ANYTHING FALCAO SAID, MAGALHES PINTO'S SPEECH IS A
FURTHER STEP IN THE DECOMPRESSION PROCESS. END SUMMARY

IN SPEECH AT CEREMONY OF SWEARING-IN AS SENATE
PRESIDENT, MINAS GERAIS SENATOR (AND FORMER GOVERNOR
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PAGE 02 BRASIL 01004 062109Z

AND FOREIGN MINISTER) MAGALHAES PINTO DECLARED INTER

ALIA THAT, "TO PRESIDE OVER THE SENATE, WITH THE PURPOSE OF ASSURING THE AUSTERITY, THE EFFICIENCY, AND THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE LEGISLATURE, IS TO IDENTIFY ONESELF WITH THE INSTITUTION ITSELF . . .". PRUDENTLY NOTING HIS DEMOCRATIC ASPIRATIONS AND HIS PARTICIPATION "IN THE CIVIL VANGUARD OF THE REVOLUTION OF 1964", HE WENT ON TO NOTE THAT THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC GROWTH AND MODERNIZATION REQUIRED A CORRESPONDING PROCESS IN THE POLITICAL AREA. HE PRAISED GEISEL'S PERCEPTION THAT "POLITICAL EVOLUTION CONSTITUTES THE BEST STRATEGY FOR OVERCOMING THE TENSIONS GENERATED BY THE TAKEOFF OF THE ECONOMY," AND ADDED "THE CLIMATE OF LIBERTY IN WHICH THE NOVEMBER 15 ELECTIONS WERE CARRIED OUT AND THE IMPECCABLE ADHERENCE TO THE PRONOUNCEMENT OF THE BALLOT BOXES GAVE THE COUNTRY THE CERTAINTY THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC IS DETERMINED TO FIND, WITHOUT HASTY MEASURES (PRECIPITATIONS), INSTITUTIONAL NORMALIZATION, THUS REINFORCING THE PERSPECTIVES FOR THE REVOLUTION TO REACH ITS FULL OBJECTIVES--IMPLANTATION OF STABLE DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS CAPABLE OF SELF-DEFENSE." ADDING THAT OF COURSE "THE COLLABORATION OF US POLITICIANS IS INDISPENSABLE," HE DECLARED THAT "LIBERALIZING PUBLIC LIFE BY MEANS OF THE ELECTIONS AND THE VISIBLE SOCIAL EASING (DESCONTRACAO), PRESIDENT GEISEL REVEALED THE MEASURE OF HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE WHICH WE (POLITICIANS) CAN PLAY IN THIS TASK, TO WHICH HE HAS CONVOKED US, OF RECOMPOSING THE CIVIC INSTITUTIONS OF BRAZIL AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS."

2. COMMENT: THE SPEECH WAS, AS IT WAS DOUBTLESS DESIGNED TO BE, JUST WHAT THE POLITICAL CLASS WANTED TO HEAR, PARTICULARLY IN THE WAKE OF THE FALCAO STATEMENT (REFTEL), AND REACTION HAS BEEN ENTHUSIASTIC. FURTHERMORE, BOTH MAGALHAES PINTO AND NEW CHAMBER PRESIDENT CELIO BORJA HAVE FOLLOWED THROUGH WITH STATEMENTS DENYING RUMORS OF IMPENDING CASSATIONS. NEITHER THOSE STATEMENTS NOR MAGALHAES PINTO'S SPEECH, HOWEVER, CONCRETELY RULED OUT ANY GOVERNMENT ACTION AGAINST CONGRESSMEN WHO CONTRAVENE ANY OF BRAZIL'S LAWS. WHILE THE PRINCIPAL EFFECT OF THE SPEECH IS PSYCHOLOGICAL, IT IS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 BRASIL 01004 062109Z

RIGHTLY SEEN AS A FURTHER STEP IN THE DECOMPRESSION PROCESS. IN THE PROSPECTS IT RAISED FOR A REVITALIZED CONGRESS AND AN EXPANDED ROLE FOR THE POLITICAL CLASS, IT CONTRASTS SHARPLY WITH THE POSITION OF THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION; AND IT DOES SO IN BRINGING THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATION DOWN ON THE SIDE OF POLITICAL PROGRESS AT A TIME OF CONSIDERABLE SPECULATION (AND SOME ANXIETY) OVER WHAT THE OPENING OF THE NEW CONGRESS WILL BRING.

END COMMENT.
CRIMMINS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, POLITICAL SITUATION, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, SPEECHES, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BRASIL01004
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750044-0760
From: BRASILIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750268/aaaacira.tel
Line Count: 117
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BRASILIA 944
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 SEP 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <04 SEP 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NEW SENATE PRESIDENT SIGNALS STRENGTHENED CONGRESS, EXPANDED ROLE FOR POLITICIANS
TAGS: PINT, BR, (PINTO, MAGALHAES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006